

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference P3118 WO ORD	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB 03/03853	International filing date (day/month/year) 05.09.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 06.09.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC B01L3/00		
Applicant EPIGEM LIMITED et al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.

This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 5 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I Basis of the opinion
- II Priority
- III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV Lack of unity of invention
- V Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI Certain documents cited
- VII Certain defects in the international application
- VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 15.03.2004	Date of completion of this report 07.01.2005
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 eprmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized Officer Tragoustis, M Telephone No. +49 89 2399-8623



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**International application No. **PCT/GB 03/03853****I. Basis of the report**

1. With regard to the elements of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, Pages

1-21 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-19 received on 06.09.2004 with letter of 03.09.2004

Drawings, Sheets

1/12-12/12 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- contained in the international application in written form.
- filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- the description, pages:
- the claims, Nos.:
- the drawings, sheets:

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5. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-19
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-19
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-19
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB 03/03853

The application relates to a modular microfluidic system comprising one base board with a plurality of fluidly linked fluid supply apertures and several microfluidic modules adapted to be detachably attached to said base board.

The microfluidic modules have a fluid inlet and/or outlet and the supply aperture on the base board is releasably fluid-tight connected to an inlet/outlet on the microfluidic module through channel means that are insertable into a suitably shaped recess.

By means of the claimed microfluidic system problems relating to modularity and variable functionality of microfluidic devices are addressed.

US-A-6331439 discloses a modular microfluidic system made of three modules or layers which can be detachably coupled to each other. A fluid coupling comprising channel means insertable into suitably shaped recesses of one module cannot be seen.

DE-A-19928412 discloses a modular microfluidic system made of a supply element coupled to microfluidic chip. Details about the coupling mechanism are not given and channel means insertable into a suitably shaped recess are not disclosed. Further the supply element does not have a plurality of fluidly linked fluid supply apertures as in the present application.

Hence claims 1-19 cannot be rendered obvious by the documents cited in the search report and they meet the requirements of Art. 33 PCT.